

*Part Ten*

Onward Bound

## *The Land of Unlimited Possibilities*

And then I was there—in the United States. What followed were six very nice years. A lot of good things happened—some bad things happened as well...you know, life. It was definitely a privilege to have been one of the founding members of *The World & I* magazine, it was a privilege having had a salary with all the social benefits that went with it, it was a privilege having worked as a paginator. What does a "paginator" do? Well, what a question, a paginator "paginates", of course. We had some big, big computers—at that point they were state of the art—where we would arrange the text with the photos or graphics and then typeset it. I loved my job. I really did. Apart from that, first I took dance classes, and after that I took martial arts classes and I saw practically every American dance company in the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C.

Now, when I look at *The World & I* page on the Internet, I can't believe that I was actually part of this beautiful magazine. Why did I give it all up, then? Well, let's call it the "Call of the Wild"...

## *Doing It All a Second Time*

Well yes, I went through the whole Blessing a second time. The Matching, the Holy Wine Ceremony, the Blessing—yes, we went to the Korean Folk Village, but no nice big trip to Pusan or other places. The second time around, one feels decidedly embarrassed to be there in the first place—there should never be any second time! Yes, yes, I know. You want to know the whole story...

Well, I arrived with all the eligible brothers and sisters from the *Washington Times* and *The World & I* magazine. We stayed in some small town on the outskirts of Seoul in Korea, it was January of 1989 and very cold. We set up house in the McCol factory. What on earth is "McCol"? It's a soft drink, made from barley...well, it ain't all that bad, you get used to the taste after a while, trust me. We were put into these big halls—yes, like always—brothers in one hall and sisters in another. And just like we did in the Fundraising Team, we put our sleeping bags one by one alongside each other, sardine-style.

I stayed two full days in the Matching hall, and watched couples being formed and listened to Rev. Moons speeches and—nothing happened. What I didn't know was that the Argentinian group came very late, so when I finally and unmistakably was asked to find my way to the brother who was standing at the other end of the room, he had only been inside of the hall for less than half an hour! I didn't look much at him, only recognized the fact that he wasn't really fair-skinned and wasn't really African black either—what kind of a place was he from? Argentina. Argentina? What did I know about Argentina? Gauchos, pampas, tango... Did he speak English? No! Did I speak Spanish? No! Oh my God...

Did I speak Italian? *Did I speak Italian?* Now, did I speak Italian? All my visions of Italy, the team, the fundraising, Jeannine, the beach, it all came back to me! I started to speak in Italian... For the life of me, I can't comprehend now how we communicated! Well, we did communicate. He spoke Italian fluently. Why? Because he was fundraising in Italy, of course. I remembered some words here

and there, but I caught up with the spirit quickly. Oh, Eveline would have been proud of me! It helped a great deal that almost every Argentinian Unification Church member spoke Italian as well. Yes, they all had been fundraising in Italy, just like me!

Life is great and mysterious! Here I was—a German in Korea being matched to an Argentinian and the only language we had in common was Italian! Because we both had been fundraising in Italy! I had been fundraising in Italy for the German Unification Church and he was at that point fundraising in Italy for the Argentinian Church. Thank God for Italy!

I was "gobbled up" by this rowdy group of Argentinians, with their spouses from all over the world. After a couple of days I had to go back to my safe haven at *The World & I* magazine in Washington D.C., but practically all of the other brides stayed on. Ours, the Blessing of January 12th 1989, was the "Mobilization Blessing"—everyone was supposed to stay for three full years in Korea, to help with the Providence. Most of the 1275 couples stayed some weeks or months, then they would settle in "my place" or "your place", and start from scratch, like we always do. The typical Unification Church couple starts with nothing—two sleeping bags and a mattress on the floor. That's how my husband and I started. You build up your fortune together. Sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't.

Yeah, yeah, all very nice—what about love? I don't know, you tell me. The only thing I can say is what Golde answered Tevje, the two of them also coming together in an arranged marriage like everyone else in that village, when he asked her that very same question in *Fiddler on the Roof*: "Do you love me?" "Oh come on...for twenty-five years I have cooked for you, I have washed for you, I have cleaned the house for you. I have given you five daughters. If that isn't love, what is?"

Last Sunday we had our fourteenth anniversary (no kidding), we took our two children to the park, rented two videos—one for them and one for us—they were extremely happy with their video and we enjoyed ours. That's love! Love doesn't just "happen"; it has to be created, tended, nourished, it has to be maintained. When I was in the United States, I had a little bonsai tree. I don't know how authentically "bonsai" the bonsai tree really was, but I loved it!

I put it on a nice place on the window sill, watered it and talked to it—it was my baby! And it grew and flourished. That's how relationships are—one has to nourish them well, if not, they will wither away.

With children it isn't any different. They have to be nourished, they have to be tended to, they have to be given their time and their space. Children, in the depth of their hearts, don't want an expensive toy, they want to have a Mommy or a Daddy who takes them seriously, spends time with them, makes sacrifices for them. They want to be proud of their mother or father; they want to feel "He really loves me, because he can give up watching the soccer game to play with me" and "She really loves me, because she stops cleaning the house and starts playing with me."

If you're single, enjoying your freedom and thinking, "Well, I don't have any children and this whole story doesn't concern me in the least," I'm sure you have a good friend who has children, who works with you, and if you are really serious about how one feels as a parent, then I have just the right proposal for you:

For one glorious weekend you can be Mommy or Daddy! Ring up your friend and suggest to him or her to drop off the kids on a Friday night at your place. The parents can pick them up again Sunday night, just in time to be ready for school on Monday morning. Just be firm that you are capable of handling the kids for one whole weekend, and that they should rent themselves a nice hotel room and do just whatever they ever wanted to do for a long time without the kids! Let them make a phone call once to make sure their children have arrived safely and then leave the phone off the hook. No one can have a decent vacation if they keep calling each other every two hours!

Really go through with this! But he warned, with children there are only two options: either you turn into that one person who's going to be their friend for life—or you turn into the "witch" they will eat alive! The secret of success with children is to deliver the goods before they actually ask for them: keep them busy with good things. If it's a nice, sunny weekend, by all means do some "outdoorsy" kind of sports or games—if you love it, they will love it too. If it turns out to be a rainy weekend, well then rent a nice movie and watch it all together. My suggestion: *Hook*, the Steven

Spielberg version of *Peter Pan*; skip the beginning and go right to the part where they all arrive in Never-never-land. The movie is made with such lush colors and has such a beautiful pirate set that you will enjoy it as much as the kids.

Believe me, there is no greater gift to be made to exhausted parents. Next Monday morning you arrive at your job a true winner—you will have had your very own weekend workshop. Best case scenario: you have two grateful friends for life and a bunch of kids who will spread throughout the whole neighborhood what an incredibly cool person you are. Worst case scenario: you will sleep twenty-four hours non-stop. In any case, it will have been a positive experience, trust me!

Well, every good story comes to an end, and it's no different with these stories. They are all true, the people are all real, and these are their real names, except for the cases when I wrote "let's call him so-and-so". This whole time period—my three years of Mobile Fundraising Team and my three years of witnessing in the Center in Munich, we Moonies, or "Unificationists" as we call ourselves nowadays, we call this time period our "Formula Course". No, it has nothing to do with baby formula. It's the "Formula Course"—called like that by Rev. Moon himself a couple of years ago. It includes three and a half years of National Fundraising Team and three and a half years of witnessing in a National Church Center. After the combined seven years, one is eligible to receive the Blessing. I did my Formula Course by the book, it had just worked out that way. Most of the members were slipping in and out of different missions all of the time. One was criss-crossing from here to there...and back again. My husband's Formula Course? Six years in the Fundraising Team in Italy! He knows every village, every beach, every town square from north to south, from Adriatic to Riviera. He even knows Sicily and Sardinia, too.

If ever, in your wheelings and dealings of work or life, you come across a "Unificationist"—not a Moonie, mind you, but a "Unificationist", which isn't all that impossible, with so many different organizations and businesses connected to the "Family Federation for World Peace and Unification" in existence, just ask casually, "So, how did you spend your Formula Course?" and see what happens. If the person you're dealing with opens his eyes wide

with the expression of "How on earth does this person know?"—it's then that you have to carry out the test: A true Unificationist will rattle on and on with stories and stories very much like mine—that's a person to be trusted! If the person doesn't really want to talk about it, ah well, then something is fishy. But don't judge that person too quickly—maybe he just needs a "little bit of help from his friends".

Well, as for myself, when I hit thirty-two years, I decided, *That's it!* For thirty-two years now I've been a missionary, a revolutionary, a paginator, a dance student, a martial arts student—a virgin! Enough is enough! So, even though I loved my job, I didn't want to become the spinster of the office. Practically everybody else at *The World & I* was respectably blessed and married—they all had their spouses, they all had their kids, most of them had grown somewhat chubby too, and were wearing their bellies of respectability with pride. I was still this skinny thing with long hair, flowery wide skirts and no one to say, "Hi, honey, I'm home" to. This had to change.

My last day at work was a Thursday and the following Tuesday, I was in Buenos Aires. Yes, and so I embarked on the final, the most daring of all of my adventures—being blessed and married to an Argentinian. But folks, that is quite another story and shall be told at another time...

*The Arrow and the Song*

I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth—I knew not where.  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth—I knew not where.  
For whom was sight so keen and strong  
That it could follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterwards in an oak,  
I found the arrow, still unbroke.  
And the song—from beginning to end—  
I found it again, in the heart of a friend.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*